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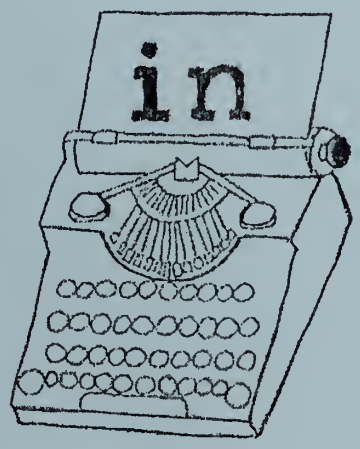

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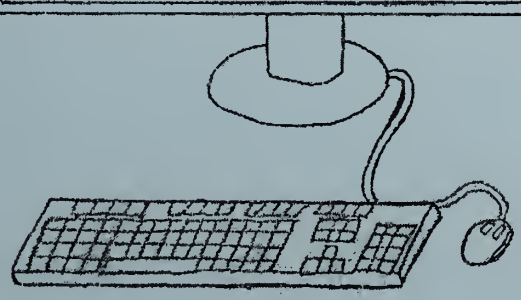

2011—2012

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Editors:

Joseph Dery, Janice Grant Menes, Kirsten Kortz, Jennifer Levesque

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Jennifer Levesque, Janice Grant Menes, Joseph Dery, Kirsten Kortz

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Introduction

by Janice Grant Menes

As you begin Basic Writing, please know that you are not alone. Your teachers, tutors, and classmates are all partners to help you improve your writing. Many of the students who came to Basic Writing before you also began this class with doubts and even fear. When they started, they complained that they didn't like to write, didn't know how, or confided that they weren't "good" at writing. Those are some of the reasons why students take Basic Writing. You are in the right place to learn how to write better. By the end of the semester, after completing Basic Writing, most students can't believe how much better they feel about their writing. Some students even admit that now they like to write because of this class.

Using this book, Writers in Progress (WIP), will help you by providing examples of the completed Basic Writing assignments. All of the essays in this book were written by last year's students who revised their essays and submitted them to be chosen for this book. At the beginning of the semester they came in like you with very little confidence; they worked hard writing, rewriting, and editing until their assignments were their best work.

Look to these essays for guidance about format and structure, and for assurance that you are heading in the right direction. Use this book as a resource. Read the essays more than once, refer to them as you are writing, and double check them if you are in doubt about how to organize your essay.

This book is going to be important to you. Don't overlook it! Remember that the writers in this book started off where you are and you can do it too. Show up to class, listen carefully, follow directions, do your best work, and maybe you'll have your essays in here next year!

Nancy Helfrich

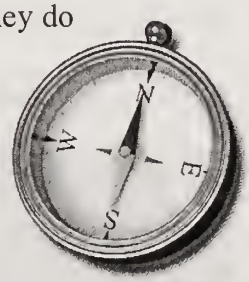
Basic Writing

Object Essay

January 31, 2011

The Compass

Everyone knows that a compass is used to show direction whether it be relative location or an absolute location. Hikers use them when they hike in the woods so that they do not get lost. Boaters, pilots, runners and cyclists, just to name a few, use a compass to get to the destination that they have mapped out. This compass was used by my father in an amphicar that travels on both land and water. My father loved this car and worked long hours restoring it to pristine condition. Each time my father drove out of the driveway in the amphicar his grin was from ear to ear, knowing his destination was to his seaplane on the lake and a plane ride to follow. I often see that memory of my father smiling and driving off in the car he was so proud of.



My compass has a special appearance. The color is black and white with shiny glossy paint. It is approximately 4" by 4", and weighs about 10 ounces. It is made of glass and steel. When you hold the compass in your hand its texture is very smooth. It has a rounded half circle top that is glass which enables you to see the markings. The bottom and sides are painted black. There are two screws holding a handle that moves up and down. There are two holes in the bottom of the handle to screw the compass into place. The markings on the compass are bright white which makes it easy to read. Large cardinal directions are printed along with short white lines that make it possible to read the degrees. The larger white lines are equivalent to ten

degrees. It has a permanent line through the center of the glass half circle that acts as a center point. No matter what direction you turn the compass; the long white line is the center point.

The compass is used in an amphicar that functions on both land and water. The compass shows the direction that you are traveling. If you need to follow a path leading northwest the compass shows which directions to proceed in order to follow the given direction. The large letters N, S, E, and W show intermediate directions. For an exact location the cardinal directions NE, SE, etc., along with degree marks give absolute location. Having a compass in the car, whether it is on land or water, helps to navigate the vehicle in the direction desired.

The compass sat upon the dashboard of my father's amphicar. After my father died my mom asked my ex-husband and I to help her sell the car. Of course, we were willing to help any way we could although it was hard to let go of something my father was so proud of and worked so hard to restore. We advertised it on Craigslist and received immediate responses. We had the car in our yard parked off the driveway. It was springtime and very muddy; the wind was biting yet the sun was shining brightly. An avid seaplane pilot came to see it and fell in love with it instantly. My heart sank! It was time to let this car leave my driveway never to be seen again. The pilot went to get a check, and I cleaned out the car looking for any personal items my father may have left behind. When it was all cleaned out my ex-husband asked me if I wanted him to remove the compass so I could keep it as a lasting memory. As the pilot drove the amphicar from the driveway, I held the compass tightly in my hand concealed in my deep jacket pocket; I knew this compass would stay with me for the rest of my life.

The compass sits upon a tall armoire in my bedroom. It is surrounded by family pictures of my mom and dad and the eight children they brought into this world. When the sunlight shines

through the blinds, it reflects off the glass of the compass and makes a bright light shine on the wall. On a day that the sun is strong you can put your hand on the rounded glass top of the compass and feel the warmth in your hand.

Being from a family of eight children it was very special having one on one time with one of your parents. On Saturday or Sunday morning, weather permitting, my dad would go flying. He always woke very early and woke the lucky one who he chose to go flying with him, and we quietly snuck out of the house. He was always fair and took turns with every one of us. We would drive the amphicar to the river where the seaplane was moored. I still remember the

sound of the docks hitting the water when I ran down the docks. We would drive the car to the seaplane and tie the car off to the mooring and jump in the plane. We went to this really cool restaurant on the river in Maine for breakfast. They had lobster lollipops at the counter, and my dad would buy me one even though it was only eight o'clock in the morning. I never wanted those early mornings with my dad to end, but as all things do, our adventure would come to an end as well.

Memories are things that no one can take away from you. They are carved into a visual picture in your mind that will stay forever and be yours and yours alone. Every morning I walk by the armoire on which the compass sits in its very special place; a place where I can see it, touch it, and remember how special those mornings were when I was the lucky one to go off on an adventure with an adventurous man.

Tasha Moncrief

Basic Writing

Object Essay

September 23, 2010

Upgrade

You will never see me without my favorite toy, my cell phone. It may seem completely silly to some for me to have such a strong attachment to a phone; however, I love my phone. I use it for so many different things, and without it I would be lost. In my opinion it is the best phone in the world!

My phone is a T-Mobile My Touch Slide android phone. It is small and balmy white with a silky, polished finish. It is about the size of a poker card, and just as addictive. The look of my phone depends on what day it is and what I'm wearing, because I often accessorize it to match my outfits. It slides open horizontally to reveal a silver keyboard with black keys in a QWERTY format. A brilliant light emits from the touch screen and when you touch an icon on it you feel a slight vibration underneath your fingertip. The display is vivid to say the least, and the sound quality is stellar. My latest favorite song is always set as the ringtone, making me want to dance each time I get a call. This phone is a micro-computer; unifying talk, text, Internet, e-mail, video, music, GPS navigation, and an abundance of other features into one ingeniously sublime package. It is by far the most versatile phone that I have ever had the pleasure of owning, and unambiguously adore it.

I remember the first time I ever saw this phone. It was about three months ago (and ten days, but who's counting). I walked into a T-Mobile store in Plaistow, NH to buy an accessory for my former phone, which was a first generation My Touch. The representative at the store told

me that there was a new model about to launch and showed me the demo phone. I fell in love with it right there on the spot. It looked a lot like my old phone, but only ten times better. It was the ultimate upgrade, and I had to have it. It was truly love at first sight! I went home after she pried the demo out of my hands, put an ad on Craigslist to sell the phone I had, and pre-ordered the new one. We've blissfully been together ever since.

This phone is multifaceted and the options are profound. I absolutely love video games and my phone is loaded with them. I have a Sega Genesis and a Super Nintendo emulator which allows me to play all the old school games I used to love like "Sonic the Hedgehog" and "Super Mario World." This keeps me entertained while performing the dullest tasks like standing in line at a grocery store or in a doctor's waiting room. The music player is something that I use on a consistent basis. I have an application that allows me to search and download songs for free, which coupled with an eight gigabyte memory can take me down memory lane a few times. The camera and video recorder let me capture an array of events. At any given moment I never know when I'll see my children doing something that's absolutely adorable, so that comes in handy. The GPS navigation is another feature to rave about. It is an actual GPS with turn by turn navigation. This is one of my favorite features. It has helped me numerous times when I was lost and I never thought I'd find my way home. I even have an application called "pintail" that lets me GPS the coordinates of my phone if it ever gets lost or stolen. Finally, there are the little things like a texting application that allows me to talk while my phone types the message, being able to watch movies, and I guess being able to just plain old talk on the phone.

My phone never fails to come in handy when I need it. One weekend I took my boyfriend Jason out for a surprise early Father's Day gift. He had no idea where we were going, but as we pulled up to Gate Three at the airport in North Andover, he knew he was in for an adventure. He

looked over at me and said, "If you think I'm jumping out of a plane you're crazy." He soon found out that he was not only riding in the helicopter but getting to fly it as well. He was shocked to say the least. The look on his face was priceless. It was the perfect camera moment, so I pulled out my phone and quickly snapped a shot. Without that picture, none of our friends were going to believe that my huge, six foot five inch boyfriend had the look of pure fear on his face. I laughed until I was in tears. He actually ended up loving the gift after we shoved him into the helicopter. He was so happy to have had the experience. However, he made me erase the picture so I couldn't embarrass him.

My phone is kept in no one particular place. It's with me wherever I go. If we are in the car it's always in the mount that's suctioned to my windshield. I had a really horrible experience one time when I dropped my phone in the toilet after using the bathroom, so now I have a lanyard attached to the bottom of it that wraps around my wrist. While doing my everyday running around it's kept in my jacket pocket, in my hand, or in my purse. At night my phone sits on my nightstand and charges while I sleep.

Being an extremely technological person, this phone makes my life so much easier. No longer having to load my bag full of devices like an MP3 player, a GPS, a laptop, and a camera before I leave the house is a blessing. I can't imagine what science will allow us to add to a phone next. Right now I feel that I have the ultimate package deal; that is, until the next one comes out. Then I'll most likely be selling this one on Craigslist to get money to buy the next best phone.

Michelle Johnson

Basic Writing

Person Essay

February 5, 2011

Sista Luv

Lyne Charland. The name may not mean anything to very many people, but to me the name represents the person who has had the greatest influence on my life. My nickname for her is Sista Luv. She is my big sister. She is compassionate, generous, and has a cheerful and easy-going disposition; I feel privileged to call her sister.

Lyne is beautiful, and I'm not just saying that because she's my sister. Her hair is the color of a wheat field at the end of the season. She has a few gray hairs here and there but that just shows her maturity. Her eyes are blue on some days and on other days, depending on what color shirt she has on, they tend to look greener. When she smiles it's with such vitality that even the crankiest of people can't help but grin. Her voice is quite melodious, in a sing song kind of way. When she walks her movements are fluid and graceful. She is usually dressed in drywall work clothes which consist of a tee shirt, jeans, and sneakers. She is of average height, about five feet eight inches tall. Her weight fluctuates between 150 pounds and about 165 pounds depending on the season. She probably wouldn't like me mentioning that fact. Her aura or inner beauty is resplendent. My sister shines. The vibrations of joyful positive energy that emanate from her when she walks into a room are extraordinary.

Lyne is the most compassionate person I know. One day three years ago Lyne and I were driving in downtown Dorchester, MA; we were a little lost looking for I-93. It was the middle of January, and the weather was horrible. It was a mix of rain, sleet, and snow. The streets and

sidewalks were icy slush, real nasty stuff. As we were driving along my sister noticed an elderly gentleman having a hard time with his wheelchair in front of a corner store. "I wonder why no one is giving that old man a hand?" she asked, mostly to herself because she hadn't really addressed me. As we continued to drive I realized that Lyne had gone around the block and stopped in front of the corner store.

"What are you doing?" I asked her.

She replied, "I'm going to stop and make that man's day." She proceeded to get out of the car and approached the old man in the wheelchair. I watched as she carried on a short conversation with the man, and then she helped him to the entrance of the store. As she was turning away I saw her pause and reach into her pocket and hand the man something. I wasn't sure exactly what she gave him, but the smile on his face said it all.

When she got back in the car and started driving I asked, "Lyne what did you give him to make him so happy?"

"I gave him a hundred dollar bill and told him to get a hot meal and a room for the night because he's homeless." That's one of many compassionate acts I've witnessed my sister do.

Another memory is when my father was diagnosed with lung cancer in 1994; she was there to ease his suffering in the last days, hours, and moments of his life. Not only did she physically take care of him, but she eased his fear of death and prepared him spiritually for the afterlife. The doctors in Canada gave my father and the family the option of accelerating death by increasing the dosage of morphine. I'm not sure about the rest of the family, but I disagreed until my sister Lyne had the strength to say to me, "Michelle, Dad is drowning with every breath he takes. He's in pain and suffering, and you need to let him go. Say goodbye so he can let go

too." She was right. He died five hours later in his sleep. Even though Lyne was grieving herself,

she remained my main support system through the funeral and the following days to come. My sister taking charge during that difficult time has made me stronger, and I will never forget to help ease the burdens of others and put their well-being and feelings before my own.

Lyne is also generous to a fault, and I'm not only talking about financial generosity. She is generous with her love and another precious commodity, her time. I remember when I split up with my husband, not for the first time, but definitely for the last time. She cared so much about my welfare that she drove from Lawrence to Nashua NH, packed up my apartment, and brought me back to Lawrence with her. For the next two weeks we drove around Lawrence looking for an apartment for me and the kids. When we found one she paid the security and the first month of rent. I remember standing in the middle of my future kitchen and Lyne exclaiming to me, "Michelle, I really want you to think about changing your habits and making a fresh start. You're young enough to start over and make a better life for you and the kids." Lyne spent almost every day and evening with me until I felt comfortable and settled in Lawrence. Even though she had her own obligations with her boyfriend and little dog Nina, she used her resources and invested a lot of time making sure my family was safe. Although that wasn't the first or the last time my sister picked me up when I fell, that is the time I'm most grateful for because it set me on a different path in life. So now when someone needs help, whether it's a family member, a friend, or a stranger, if I'm able to help in any way I do my best to fulfill their needs.

Lastly, my sister Lyne has the sunniest disposition of anyone I know. It doesn't matter what happens, whether it is gridlock on the expressway, a long

train making her late for an appointment, or even a flat tire without a spare; nothing manages to ruffle her feathers or alter her perpetual happy mood. "You can't control everything, so why get upset? Things happen, get over it. Be happy." That was her reaction when her son totaled her brand new car. She gets aggravated for a few minutes because she is human, but she snaps out of it a short time later. She never takes her irritation out on others. So when I start to get a little hot under the collar, and I feel like I'm going to snap I make an effort to take a deep breath and relax. Then I smile to myself and remember that I can't control everything so I may as well let go and be happy.

Lyne Charland. To me that name means a great deal. She is my big sister. The positive impact she has had on my life is remarkable. When I was younger I was a selfish and sad person, but listening to and watching my sister in action has taught me that "It is better to give than to receive." It's more fulfilling for your soul. I will always strive to emulate her today and in the future. She is an exceptional person, and I'm proud to call her Sista Luv.

Greg Davenport

Basic Writing

Person Essay

October 6, 2010

Boss, Friend, Mentor

It's not often someone comes into your life and has an impact that helps you turn an important corner. Well my friend Andy has done just that for me. I look up to him as well as look to him for answers to some of life's puzzling moments. Andy's intuition always leads to him imparting some words of wisdom to me. He has given me the courage to "do the next right thing." He reminds me that taking the side of right isn't always easy. Andy's encouragement, honesty, and understanding are what make him an important positive role model for me, and because of this influence it has led me to become not only his friend but his colleague as well.

Andy has a head of brown, loose curls that would remind one of Mike Brady from the Brady Bunch. He wears silver, wired rimmed glasses. Behind those glasses are blue eyes that to me are thought provoking, which makes me wonder what is going on inside that brain, especially when I'm looking for a solution to a problem in my professional or personal life. He stands about 5' 10" with a slender build that comes from trail hiking, fishing and kayaking. His dress is usually casual from Dockers to jeans and always some sort of button-up shirt, short sleeve in the summer and long sleeve Henleys in the winter. You may also catch him looking like an executive from time to time considering he is the director of the Day Break Homeless Shelter in Lawrence. His shoes vary in type from trail boots, and/or sneakers to casual loafers. Andy drives a gray Toyota two door pick-up truck. It is this truck that gets him to most of his fishing and outdoor activities. He is an avid lover of dogs. He says they're better than people. Andy also

enjoys an occasional bottle of wine with dinner. He likes to attend wine tastings. Traveling excites him too; as I write this he is heading off to Italy within the week. We both have the same birth sign, which is Cancer, so I look forward to seeing him daily as he always has the Boston Herald, and we check our horoscopes together. He always has some insightful thoughts as to what it means for the day or what we're in for. At fifty two years old we are close in age. This is why I believe we understand each other, our age and his ability to be open minded.

Andy's encouragement is always at the ready. No matter what idea I'm thinking about whether it be going back to school or just trying to be better at my job, he is willing to show me the way by example. I've learned this by seeing how he has improved the shelter, and what it has to offer people by bringing a new approach to how things are done now. Like the time Andy motivated one of the residents to utilize his talents as a carpenter to install new flooring and bathroom fixtures or just offer services to the residents from within the community. Through his examples, I in turn am able to encourage others to think of other possibilities like: seeking recovery, going back to school and conquering any fears that may hold them back from doing things to better their lives, or I help them find what is needed to move forward. He is always seeking to improve the quality of life of others. "No one should be without the basic needs: food, shelter, clothing and knowing that they are respected," is one the quotes I often remember from one of the first real conversations we shared. His encouragement has made me want to do the same for others and to elevate my own life.

The first time I met Andy I noticed, in talking to him, the honesty that came from him, and I in turn wanted him to know he could trust me as well. I've seen him be brutally honest even when it didn't benefit someone. Something I'm sure that was not easy to do knowing the outcome

was telling a resident that they had to find somewhere else to sleep for the night because of their actions. Now by seeing this, I too know that I can do it if needed. He's taught me that being honest in my dealings with others means the worries are less and good wins out. You attract the kind of people that most of the times have your best interest at heart. Honesty is a quality Andy has, and I strive to be more honest in my life with people. More importantly, he's shown me to be honest with myself. Just the other day a person we both care about did something to a staff person, and Andy had to ask this person to leave. It was straight honesty when he told this individual the reasons why he could not return, and he had been indefinitely suspended from the shelter. This meant they may not have had a place to go or anywhere to stay. In this case honesty was the only way. He handled it, and I'm sure inside there was a level of discomfort. However this guy can only respect him for the decision, yet Andy tried to make other arrangements as well when it was not necessary for him to have done so. I think of Andy's honesty in this instance and think, if put into the same situation could I do the same? I only hope so.

After our first encounter, when I explained in detail my past substance abuse issues, homelessness and troubles with the court system, I realized how understanding this man was considering his law enforcement background. I was surprised that I was able to open up to him and share a side of myself that goes against everything I ever believed in. As a resident of the shelter, in one of our first conversations, he explained to me what his mission was going to be for the shelter and asked me if I'd be willing to be a part of the changing process. After hearing this I realized that I wanted something different for my life. He said to me, "I don't want this place to be an anchor to people, holding them down. I would like to see it become a springboard giving the people opportunities to better their lives."

I said, "Exactly what opportunities are you talking about?"

He then said, "Whether it be housing, schooling or job opportunities, if they are seeking recovery we want to be able to provide all these services to them."

I said to him, "I would be honored to take part in this and thank you for the chance."

Talking with Andy inspired me, and I realized that this man understood what we were going through, having no direction and no one to believe in us living here at the shelter. Andy was willing to provide the support that was needed to start this process. Now, a year later, I'm working side by side with Andy trying to accomplish that and much more, and we are still continuing to try and find other ways of improving the quality of life for homeless people in the city of Lawrence. We are giving them a shelter that respects them, where they can come get a hot meal, a safe place to sleep and any services that we can provide to help them better the quality of their lives. Through Andy's vision and dedication and an understanding of both, the future looks brighter.

Honesty, encouragement and understanding are only a few of the qualities that I admire in this man and can only hope that one day I can achieve some of these in my lifetime. He shared his vision with me and allowed me to take part in it. He's given me the chance to give back after years of taking. Today I feel I am able to encourage others, to listen and understand their struggles, like Andy did for me. I'll be forever grateful for him believing in me and giving me an opportunity to become a better person. It is the first time someone actually believed in me without wanting something in return other than for me to do well and succeed. His friendship is invaluable to me, for I know he is always there for me to rely on no matter what my situation is. For the first time in my life I believe I have someone I can call a best friend. He seems to always understand what it is I'm going through. This is why Andy's influence in my life today has allowed me to believe in myself and take chances like attending college and reaching out to

allowed me to believe in myself and take chances like attending college and reaching out to others. By being a powerful example I believe others can have some hope and maybe choose to follow in my footsteps, and that anything is possible when someone believes in you, like Andy believed in me.

Stephen Gillespie

Basic Writing

Person Essay

March 20, 2011

Uncle Inspiration

Louis A. Dubois was born August 8, 1948. He is the youngest son of Eugene and Lillian Dubois. He is the younger brother of my mother, Marie Antoinette Dubois. He has always been a positive role model and a good influence. I have always admired my Uncle Louis for his patience, for always acting responsibly and for his encouragement and inspiration; most of all, my uncle's most prominent and most noticeable personality trait is his constant striving for perfection in all of his endeavors.

Uncle Louis is eighteen years older than I am. He has a tall, slender physique, a bit lanky. He has hazel eyes, short black hair combed to the side, sometimes he's got a few days of scruffy salt and pepper hair growth on his face, but he's usually clean shaven. He's always dressed in a white t-shirt, blue jeans with a black belt, and tan work boots. There's a large loop of keys on a brass hook clip attached to one of his belt loops. There's a shiny silver wristwatch dangling loosely on his left wrist. A green bottle of Coca Cola protrudes from his faded dungaree jacket right side pocket, and I can smell the Irish Spring soap he used to shower with. There's also a Lucky Strike cigarette dangling from his wide, thin lips or smoldering between his nicotine stained index and middle fingers. This habit earned him the nickname Lucky Louis as I would often hear this shouted out by his friends as they greeted him, "Hey! Lucky Louis!"

He would reply in his calm, clear, soft voice, as he waved his hand dismissively in the air, "I don't feel lucky." Then he would look at me and wiggle his ears, and I would laugh. I

don't know how he did that. He was just able to control the muscles that made his ears wiggle. Another thing he would do to make me laugh was to remove his false teeth, suck in his cheeks, stick out his tongue, and cross his eyes. This contortion of his face was actually a little creepy, but it was just for fun and laughs. I'll never forget it.

My Uncle Louis is a patient man. I can remember when Uncle Louis taught me to play chess when I was five years old. Chess is a complicated game with many different playing pieces, each of which is capable of moving in a variety of various but specific ways, and the strategy is constantly evolving though the objective remains the same. You win the game by trapping the king in what is called a checkmate. I can only imagine now how frustrating it might have been trying to explain the complex rules, objectives, and names and movements of the character pieces to a five year old. Uncle Louis never raised his voice or lost his temper. He always displayed this same demeanor, even years later when he taught me how to drive a car.

Uncle Louis is a very responsible person. He's never late on any payment for anything. He believes the only way to do anything is the right way. This implies that all safety rules and procedures be followed to the letter. He also wouldn't even consider breaking a law or even bending a rule. He will sit at a red light at 3:00 AM with nobody in sight for miles just to have a clear conscience. I remember when he advertised one of his handguns for sale in a local want ad magazine. When a man arrived and stated that he had forgotten to bring his Firearms Identification Card (F.I.D.) Uncle Louis apologized but wouldn't show the weapon without it. He simply wouldn't take the chance that he might break a law or rule because that would be irresponsible.

Uncle Louis is also very encouraging and inspirational. I'll never forget him saying to me, "Steve, you can do anything you set your mind to." This statement has given me an extreme amount of confidence in myself and my ability to overcome any challenge. Uncle Louis is very inspirational. Uncle Louis has taught me many things ranging from how to play chess, how to drive a car, and how to safely handle a firearm, and in my opinion has been an outstanding example of exemplary behavior. I consider myself very fortunate to have such a good role model in my life. It is because of these qualities and others that he is so inspiring. Something else he said to me was, "Live your own life and make your dreams come true." To me this was the equivalent to giving me permission to be myself, to do what I want, when I want, how I want. And I do, with the inspiration I got from my Uncle Lou.

Uncle Louis's most prominent personality trait is his perfectionism. The first time I saw

my uncle's room I was about five years old. I was immediately astonished, amazed, bewildered, and curious all at once. It was as if I had entered someone's private museum. Unique and fascinating items were elegantly displayed throughout the entire room, and everything was spotlessly clean. The wood gun cabinet with the glass doors displaying several rifles grabbed my attention immediately. There was a big silver box, with two big reels on the front, on top of a giant wood bureau. One of the reels had a ribbon of some sort that got fed through a couple of wheels and over a central pickup head then through a couple more wheels where it then connected to the other reel. There were also several buttons and knobs on the front panel. It's called a reel-to-reel player/recorder. It was the cutting edge media player of the time. Sitting beside the reel-to-reel was the coolest looking camera. The most notable aspect or characteristic of this camera was the accordion-like fold out front protrusion, which was attached to a heavy, solid black, metal case with buttons, knobs, and dials that pointed

at numbers. There was a button that when pressed would cause a flap to open at the very rear of the camera where the film was loaded and wound on a spool. There was also a police scanner and a really cool television across from a black leather recliner. As I continued to survey this marvelous space it became evident that everything had been carefully placed or strategically positioned with great thought and planning as well as being meticulously well maintained. Uncle Louis also takes great pride in his ability to be very precise. Uncle Louis is a furniture and cabinet maker, and a finish wood craftsman. He has a shop full of power saws and lathes of all shapes and sizes. I can remember hearing him say, "Measure twice and cut once," and "A good craftsman always takes pride in his workmanship." I'll never forget these quotes, and I also try my best to uphold myself to the highest standards of perfection that I may achieve.

As a youngster I had no patience, I was irresponsible and the only action that I could encourage or inspire was for people to leave the room when I entered. I certainly didn't do anything with any precision or care either. Knowing my Uncle Louis has changed that fact. Because of his example I am a much more patient person, and I am also a much more responsible person. I can even encourage or inspire people to remain in a room when I enter. I strive for perfection in all my endeavors now. Whether I'm taking out the trash or trying to solve the most complex problems, I do so to the best of my ability. I owe a great debt of gratitude to my Uncle Louis for not just instructing me, but for enlightening me as to how I can be a better person.

Colby Hurd

Basic Writing

Narrative Essay

February 8, 2011

Judgment Day

It was a cool muggy day in November of 2010, three days before Thanksgiving, and the sun had already started to rise. As I finished getting dressed my mom walked into my room and said, "Good luck today, you're going to need it." I went downstairs and my older brother was already there with McDonald's breakfast in his hands. We ate breakfast without much to say because we both knew what lay ahead of me for the rest of the day. After we finished eating and had taken time to digest we headed out the door and left for a day that would change my life forever.

The ride was pretty quiet except for the occasional joke my older brother would tell to try and cheer me up. When we finally got there and made it through the security check-in, we headed upstairs to the main courtroom. We sat and waited for my lawyer to show up and every second that went by waiting for him made me more and more nervous. He finally showed up twenty minutes after us and immediately came over to us. Russell, my lawyer, took us to a room, and we discussed what the game plan was for the trial ahead of us. It sounded good, two of the three people that were in the vehicle pleaded the fifth and were allowed to go home. At about 9:30 AM we finally left the room and headed into the courtroom for the longest day of my life. After a little while, the other people started to walk in like the prosecutor, court officer, and the announcer/recorder. After the judge came in they asked for the jury to file in and then started to check who was eligible. Once the jury was read their rights and their job for the day, they were

ready to begin the trial. I was 19 years old and was being accused of operating under the influence (OUI).

The prosecutor started things off with her opening statement. While I was listening to her, I had noticed that she had said "OUI" and that sent a cold chill down my back. This was the first time I had heard everything I was being accused of, and it really didn't sound good. In my head the only thing I could say was, "How did I end up here?" They called up the first witness who was the owner of the house where the vehicle had crashed. They asked her questions like, "What did you see that night and what did you do?" Her answers were clear, and she stated that when she went outside I was the only person near the vehicle and seemed to be unconscious. The next two witnesses were the two officers that had showed up to the scene first. They confirmed that I was the only one near the vehicle and that I was unresponsive and seemed to be unconscious. They also noted that I had a strong scent of liquor on my breath. After stating where they found the car and the damage to it, they went on to say that they found a girl hiding in the woods nearby and a young man walking home. Hearing that made me feel a little better because now it's not only me in the picture and puts the question of who was actually driving the vehicle in the jury's mind.

After the officers had given their testimonies, they called up one of the kids that was in the vehicle with me. Now I didn't know this kid very well and only had hung out with him a few times so I had no idea how he was going to react to the questions that were about to be asked. As he walked up to the stand my heart started pounding because I knew that with this statement, he could easily convict me. They started off asking him to describe what had happened that night. He stated that we were all at a house party and were all drinking alcohol. He had not been watching how much alcohol everyone was drinking and had no idea who was drunk and who

wasn't. After a while, the person throwing the party kicked everyone out because he wanted time with his girlfriend. We had no idea where to go, so four of us jumped into the vehicle that I had driven there that night and we took off.

They stopped him right there and asked him to state who was driving at that time. My heart sank because I knew what he was going to say and after a little pause he finally stated, "Colby Hurd."

The prosecutor asked him to identify me and he said, "The defendant who is wearing a brown striped button up shirt."

I had no emotion because I had no idea how to react to this, but my gut feeling was that I'm screwed. He went on to say that we had stopped at CVS in Newburyport and had bought some food but couldn't remember what we bought. Later on he stated that after we left CVS, we were going back to the house where the party had taken place. They stopped him again and asked who the driver was then. After another pause, he stated that I was the driver again.

By now I was sure that I was screwed and the jury was going to convict me. He went on to explain how the accident happened. He said that I had pulled over to the right side of the road to go to the bathroom. As I got out I either shifted into neutral or the brakes had failed when I shifted into park. The vehicle rolled back, crossed the road, hit a big rock and rolled over on its side. Nobody was hurt but he couldn't remember what happened after that except that he had woken up in his bed the next morning. After he said that he had no injuries and that he couldn't remember what happened I felt a little better because I thought that maybe the jury would think that he didn't actually know what happened. It was a long shot, but I had to think that way so I could try and stay positive. They asked him one more time who was driving the vehicle and

again he stated me. When they finally asked him to step down it had been about twenty minutes, but to me it felt like it had been two hours.

After his statement, they asked him to step down. Now it was time for the closing statements, which I thought weren't going to be a big deal. The prosecutor started first, and she changed my mind about closing statements awfully quick. Her goal was to convict me and by doing so she had to make me sound like a bad guy. Unfortunately for me she was good at it. Listening to her statement was very unpleasant because as she talked, the worse I felt. She made me sound like I was the worst human being in the world and that there was absolutely no doubt that I was guilty.

When she finally finished, my lawyer was up to give his statement. His job was to

convince the jury that there was no case because there was no way of putting me behind the wheel of the vehicle. I felt a little better after his statement, but then the judge chimed in and told the jury what they were looking for. In an OUI case they look for three things, that the person was intoxicated, the vehicle had crossed lanes, and that they had the right person who was driving the vehicle. Well, through the statements they already know for a fact that the vehicle had crossed lanes and that I was intoxicated, so the only thing they had to decide was whether or not I was driving the vehicle.

After they were instructed on what they were looking for, the jury went and deliberated in the jury room. By now everything was out of my hands so I reminded myself of my options and started to calm down. My lawyer on the other hand was pacing back and forth and was extremely worried. I got tired of watching him and stepped outside to get a drink. It was 4:30 PM and my

brother had already left to pick up his kids, and my dad was waiting outside in the car with my mom. I got my drink and sat down and started to remind myself that I no longer had control of the situation and that no matter what the decision was I had to accept it.

Fifteen minutes later the court officer came out and told me that the jury had made their decision. As I got up to walk back in all I could think of was, "Holy crap fifteen minutes is not long at all I'm totally guilty!" I went back in there bracing myself for the worst. The judge came back in and after he came back the jury started to walk in. As they walked by me my heart pounded harder and harder almost to the point where I thought I was going to have a heart attack. Once everyone was back, the judge asked the jury if they had made their decision and the head juror replied, "Yes."

They asked me to stand and the head juror said, "In the case of Colby Hurd versus the Commonwealth of Massachusetts we find the defendant not guilty."

After hearing those words I felt so relieved and a huge weight was lifted off my shoulders. The judge dismissed the case and said I was free to go. As we left the courthouse I thanked my lawyer for everything.

As we shook hands he said to me, "I'm sorry if I scared you while we waited for the verdict. I was so nervous because I had no idea what the jury would say, but hey I'll take a not guilty."

I answered back and said, "I will definitely take a not guilty any day. And you did seem a little more nervous than you should have, but I came in looking for the worst and got the best so everything's ok."

I left that courthouse with the biggest smile I had ever had. I found my parents in the parking lot and told them the good news. They were just as ecstatic as I was. I got in the car and

we headed home. The entire ride home my parents kept reminding me how lucky I was and continued to give me the riot act speech. Even though they lectured me it was the most comforting part of the day. All day my emotions were on a rollercoaster, but now I was free and ready to change my life.

Looking back, the worst thing about that day was being in that courtroom. I have never experienced anything like that before and for the first time in my life I was scared about the outcome of my future. After hearing those words, "not guilty," I knew that I would never want to go through anything like that again. Not only did I learn my lesson about drunk driving, but I also learned a lesson in life. It's not every day that someone is granted a second chance but on that day I was. In that courthouse I had used up all of my luck and went through the worst experience of my life. It was time to put that experience behind me and move on by start living smart and thinking about the result of my actions.

Leading up to that day I had made a promise to myself that I would make a change. I knew that I never wanted to be in that situation again and that I had to make better decisions. Now that I got my freedom back from the law it was time to put my promise into action. Since then I haven't been anywhere near as reckless as I was, and I have taken the time to better myself. I have also started to think about my future more and what I would need to do so I could better myself. Second chances are not given out every day, but when they are we must make the most out of them.

Sharon Pelczar

Basic Writing

Narrative Essay

Spring 2011

To Be or Not to Be

It was just another typical Thursday afternoon. Never could I have imagined what was yet to come. I think we all assume it couldn't happen to us, so we turn our backs on what could be.

I rushed out of work around 2:30 PM holding a huge cardboard box containing a broken computer for my husband to fix. The cool February nip was in the air. The nip was causing my fingers to cramp up and turn numb. "Ukk! Why me? All I want is to just go home." Unfortunately, what I wanted and what needed to be done were two different things. I put the computer in the trunk of the car and proceeded on my way to pick up my eight year old at school. Arriving at the school I had to battle my way through all the children before I was able to get to my son. "Hey babe, are you ready to go?"

"Yes mommy. Where are we going?"

"You have a doctor's appointment, and we are going to be late."

While driving to his doctor's appointment all I could think about was the homework I had to finish by the following Monday. We were in and out an hour later, leaving with a shiny pink and blue bag. The bag contained a new medicine for my son to try during the next few weeks. As the light sky turned gray we continued on our way to pick up the rest of the family. Arriving home I told my husband that there was a computer in the trunk to fix, and if he could fix it we could keep it. He gathered the big box out of the trunk while I picked up my two year old

daughter, her daycare bag, and the shiny pink and blue bag. We all squeezed through the door as if it were some kind of race. I was completely exhausted, so I put down my daughter and set the bags on the computer table. I was anxious to see what my husband would think of the computer, so I opened up the box for him. Immediately my daughter grabbed the box and started playing inside of it. Jose sat at his computer table and started to examine the broken computer. I went over to the couch to start working on my homework.

Twenty minutes later I heard my husband hollering at our daughter in a way that seemed troublesome, "Sylah! Put that down! Give it to me!"

I leaned over to see what the trouble was all about. I observed my husband quickly pull my daughter out of the box. As he pulled her out she was holding the pink and blue bag containing my son's medicine. The boxes that were in the bag fell off her lap. I jumped off the couch and ran over to the scene, grabbing the boxes to see that most were empty. Immediately, I flipped over the cardboard box she was playing in, hoping to find all the loose pills, but nothing was there. Snatching my daughter away from her father, I forced my hand in her mouth feeling for the pills. When I felt nothing I shoved my fingers down her throat hoping she would puke them up, but still nothing but a handful of teeth marks from her biting me. With nothing left to do I grabbed her boots, jacket, and the bag with all the empty medicine boxes and ran out the door. Frightened by all the commotion, she cried hysterically. I strapped her in the car seat and drove her to the hospital. Five minutes is all it took for me to get her there, but it felt like hours as my body uncontrollably shook with fear thinking the worst.

Pulling into the Emergency Department (ED) parking lot, I grabbed her and the bag and bolted inside. Approaching the front desk, cutting in front of two people, I said with such panic

in my voice, "My daughter swallowed nineteen of my son's pills! She needs to be seen right away!"

I gave the front desk nurse the bag holding the empty boxes with the name of the medicine and the milligram amount. My daughter and I were escorted into the ED unit, put in a room and told someone would be right with us. I was still extremely nervous, but was able to gather a little sense of comfort, knowing I got her into a safe place in a short amount of time. But that sense of comfort came to a halt. Watching the clock as it went "tick, tick, tick" my daughter started nodding off. Fearing the worst, I wondered to myself why twenty minutes had passed and nobody had yet to check on us. My legs were moving at a pace that could have lifted me up in the sky and my teeth were grinding to the point I could feel them getting smaller. I hit the nurse call button almost breaking it.

"Can I help you?" replied a nurse.

"Yes! I have been here for 20 minutes with my 2 year old. She swallowed my son's meds and nobody has come to check on her. She is starting to fall asleep and I know that's not a good thing."

"Okay, someone will be right there."

My mind was starting to race and my frustrations were beginning to take over. Ten more minutes went by as I talked to my daughter trying to keep her awake. I continued to comfort her as I stared at the clock. Finally, I jumped off the bed and walked out of the room. I found myself standing in an empty hallway as if I were in an abandoned building. I screamed, "Hello! Is there anybody in this freaking hospital?" A nurse heard and approached me with an agitated look on her face.

"What's the problem?"

"Are you serious?" I said.

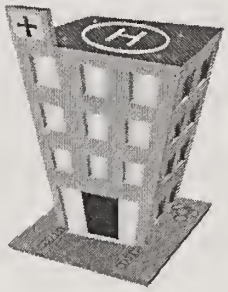
Once again, I explained the reason I was there and why I was upset. A doctor overheard us and came over to address the situation. He walked me back to my room and began to ask questions. I became highly annoyed due to the fact I had already answered all these questions earlier and still nearly 45 minutes had gone by and my daughter had not been examined. A nurse came into the room with a cup of charcoal for my daughter to swallow, but it was too late due to the fact that they waited too long; she had already fallen asleep. I was then made aware that they were going to call in a helicopter and that she needed an air medical transport to Children's Hospital Boston. Hearing she had to be flown to Boston brought tears to my eyes. This horrific situation had just gotten worse. It was do or die now. I called my husband to tell him the news as he cried over the phone. I told him to make arrangements for our boys to be picked up and to meet me at Children's. I then called my mother and cried. On my way back to the room I heard my daughter screaming in a way I had never heard her scream before. It took a team of four including myself to hold her down while they inserted IV's. It was crazy! She was like a beast fighting off all of us screaming "NO!" and "Mommy!" while violently ripping the IV's out of her skin. Hooking her up to the EKG machine was just as bad. I felt like the worst mother in the world.

The helicopter arrived and took the two of us to Boston. As I gazed out the window I was taken aback by the beauty of the city's night life from up above. I quietly wished under my breath that Sylah could see too. Thoughts of her smiling during the early morning of that day ran through my mind. I kept asking God to please leave her be and told him I was not ready to let her go.

We landed on the roof of the hospital and were taken to the ICU. Upon arriving, the medical staff was not ready for her. Shocked as I watched nurses look for a crib for her, I finally hollered at them to just put her on a damn bed and hook her up to the machines. They brought in a bed for her, but when they went to hook her up the machines would not work. The nurses could see the disappointment on my face due to their lack of preparation. Out of frustration, a nurse hit the machine, and it started to work. Suddenly, it felt like time just froze. I looked around and it was just me, her, and the sounds of medical equipment. I would talk to her hoping she could hear what I was saying, touch her hoping to get a response. I wanted her to know I loved her and that her papi was on his way. Shortly after, her papi and tio walked in with looks of worry on their faces. We sat in silence and stared at her for several minutes. Before leaving, her tio wanted to say a prayer and made known to us that back home she had umpteen people praying for her that very minute. People who didn't know us stopped what they were doing to pray for our daughter. Thinking of what these people were doing for my daughter and what they were asking God to do made me think of my own relationship with him and how selfish I had been for several years. I had cut off my relationship with God many years ago, but noticed whenever I was in need of something so bad like the life of my daughter; there I was begging him for his help. In my mind he only exists when I'm in need of something; other than that I want nothing to do with him. Knowing God was the one to decide my daughter's fate, I repeatedly begged him for forgiveness and to give me another chance.

Soon after my daughter was able to be removed from the ICU and transferred to the Pediatric Unit. The doctors were amazed by the speed of her recovery and felt confident enough for her papi and I to take her home and continue her care. It was a rough few weeks for the family, but we all pulled through and my beautiful daughter survived. We enjoy every moment

of her being, and she is enjoying life. I truly believe that the prayers my daughter had received helped keep her alive. Every day I am thankful for the life of my children, and I feel I owe it to God and to the people who pray for their safety. I realized a lot from this tragic experience. I realized not to take life for granted whether it's mine or someone else's. I realized that being selfish could put others in harm's way, and I realized the importance of having God in my life.



Maureen Santo

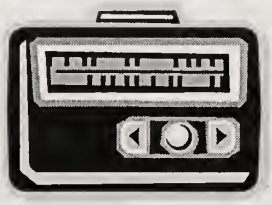
Basic Writing

Media Essay

April 5, 2011

Does Anyone Remember The Radio?

I believe in this day and age most people do not have a lot of interest in the radio. Technology has provided us with different sources that provide us with music. We have the iPod, iPad, and the MP3 player. You can download anything from the computer and even our televisions have the technology to play just about any type of music you like. My fondest childhood memories include the radio, whether it was a great family party or just a nice Sunday afternoon watching my mom cook Sunday dinner and listening to her favorite radio station. Today, the radio brings back wonderful childhood memories, makes me feel better when I am feeling down, gives me motivation when I am doing never ending chores around the house, and keeps me updated on current events.



As far back as I can remember my mom always had the radio on. Her radio was a small black transistor radio that sat on our kitchen table. My mom would adjust it to her favorite station and position it perfectly for the best reception. My greatest childhood memory was making chocolate chip cookies with my mom and listening to the radio. We would laugh and sing for hours, sometimes burning a batch or two because we would be having so much fun singing we would forget to check the cookies in the oven. I remember a few times when my mom would actually shut the kitchen window because we were singing so loud. She was afraid the neighbors would complain. Until this day, whenever I hear Rupert Holmes' "Escape" (The Pina Colada

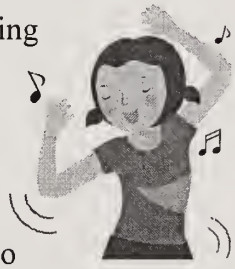
Song), it brings me right back to my mom's kitchen and reminds me of the little black radio, and all the fun we had making cookies.

I love to listen to the radio when I am feeling down or have had a bad day. The radio can make a world of difference to me. When I am down or feeling sad I like to sit in my favorite brown rocking chair in my kitchen and listen to seventies and eighties music. Usually 98.5 FM will do the trick for me; they have a great variety of old songs. Carly Simon's, "You're So Vain," or maybe a good Journey song from the early eighties. Whatever the song is, I can usually have a good cry for myself, and this always clears my head. I remember a particular time when the children were small. It was a rainy Saturday morning, and it had been raining for days. Both my children Nick and Elizabeth were up early and the fighting began immediately. Nick had Elizabeth's toy. Elizabeth had more milk than Nick. Nick changed Elizabeth's show and much more. This went on for hours, and I was ready to pull the hair out of my head. I just needed a break from everyone and everything. My husband, being the good man that he is, decided to take the children out for the afternoon, and give me some time to myself. I sat in my favorite chair with the radio up to its highest decibel that I could stand and just sang and rocked back and forth for hours. When my husband returned with the children later that afternoon and found me in the exact same position that I was in when he left, we both started laughing hysterically. I think both our stomachs hurt. My husband and children joined me in my musical afternoon and we danced around the kitchen laughing. What started as a bad day turned out to be a great one. I truly give credit to my radio and my music that day.

There is nothing better than a warm summer day by the pool with my beautiful sounding Bose radio. I like to play today's greatest hits and sing along with the kids while they are having fun splashing around the pool. I would say the kids like this time the most, because it's always

their music I listen to. This always puts a smile on my face and makes me happy to stay connected with my children. One of my fondest memories was Elizabeth's 14th birthday. It was a beautiful July day, and we were planning a great party for later in the afternoon. We all decided we would go for a swim and have a little fun before we had to get ready for the company. Once again, we cranked up the radio and spent several hours singing and splashing around. We were having so much fun we lost track of time, and we had only about a half an hour left before the company arrived.

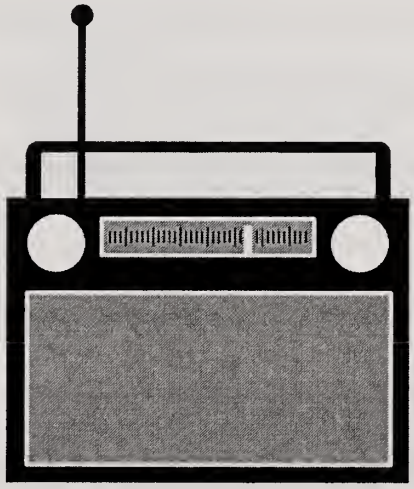
I love listening to the radio when I am cleaning the house or cooking a big dinner. I know I get this from my mom. I attribute my love for all the old songs to her and all the childhood memories. When I am cooking for a holiday or just making a big pot of sauce and meatballs I always turn the radio up high. This just makes everything so fun and the time just seems to fly by. I think Thanksgiving is my favorite time to do this. I always dread all the work that I have to do, but the minute I turn my radio on everything seems so much better and I end up enjoying the preparations. My children also love this whether they stop in the kitchen for a taste of something good they smell or simply to ask when it will all be ready, we always end up singing and dancing around the kitchen. I think all of my children know Don McLean's "Miss American Pie" by heart. They might deny this if you ask them, although they will tell you what great memories they have of mum in the kitchen listening to her radio, especially on a holiday.



I have always listened to the radio to keep up on the daily news and current events. Like every busy mom, I don't have much time for television. My favorite radio program is “Matty in the Morning," on 107.9 FM. I listen to this in the morning while I am driving to school. I get all of my celebrity updates which is very entertaining, especially lately with Charlie Sheen all over

the news. I count on the radio for my weather reports and world news, such as the terrible situation in Japan right now. It also gives me local updates on upcoming events in and around the Boston area, like concerts or different fundraisers that might spark my interest. I believe the radio is a great source of information and entertainment all rolled into one.

I might be old school, but I think the radio is a lot easier then trying to upload, download, or stick speakers in your ears just for entertainment. Isn't it easier just to turn the radio on? Maybe I am a dying breed. I believe the radio has lost its appeal to the younger generation. If you think about it, the radio started it all. Before there was television, Internet or any other gadget, there was the radio. The radio has always provided us with some sort of entertainment and has given us information from around the world. The radio reminds me of great childhood memories. It will always be my choice for lifting my spirits, giving me great motivation, and keeping me updated on current events. This will always be my choice of media.



Kimberly Rosado

Basic Writing

Media Essay

Spring 2011

Info at a Blink of an Eye

The use of the Internet has been a big thing as long as I can remember. Growing up I never had Internet access at home, so I would always hear about it but never really used it. Then I bought an Apple Mac home computer back in 2000, even then I hardly used it because I knew very little about the use of the Internet. I went online once in a while to do a search for a school assignment but that was it. It was not until the spring of 2005 when I bought my first Sony laptop, that I became hooked on the Internet. The use of the Internet is helpful in my life because it helps me keep track of my banking and billing needs, connect with friends and family, keeps me updated with the local news and weather, and lets me shop comfortably while I am at home.

First of all the Internet is outstanding for all of my banking and billing needs. I am bad when it comes to keeping a balanced checkbook. Checking my account on a daily basis online is one of the quickest and most reliable ways to keep track of what's coming in for money and what's being paid out. Online banking has all of your transactions listed so it is all kept track of, so one does not have to wait for a statement in the mail for proof or confirmation of a payment. Also, when it comes to paying bills, I can't remember the last time I paid a bill using a personal check, envelope and stamp. All one has to do now is just visit the website for the particular bill and pay it right online. The Internet has made it so easy to both manage my banking account and billing needs.

The second reason why the Internet is so helpful to me is to connect with friends and family. There are so many ways that you can connect with other people, through Yahoo, AIM Chat, MySpace, Facebook, and Skype just to name a few ways. All of these sites are good ways to connect with people near and far away or people you have not spoken to in a long time. I usually chat with my friends and family through Facebook. On Facebook I was able to connect with a friend that I had not seen or spoken to since high school. At times I would always wonder about her. I did a search on her name and there was her page. I friended her and have been in contact since. One recent thing that happened thanks to the Facebook site was my mother was able to connect with her half sister, an aunt I never knew I had. She knew that she had a half sister when she was little, but never knew what happened to her or where she lived. Thanks to the Internet they were able to find each other and meet up, and now have a relationship. As you communicate with friends and loved one through any of these sites, it is so easy to send invites, share photos and experiences, which actually helps save money at the same time. The Internet has so many ways that both friends and family can connect and keep in contact.

Third, the Internet is a good way to keep up to date with the local news and weather. Nowadays, people are just way too busy to actually sit and watch TV. When it's time for me to relax at the end of the day, I can never stay up to watch the late news. As soon as I begin to relax I always fall asleep quickly. The Internet has made it so easy, that with just a click everything that has been mentioned on the news is all in front of you on the site. My favorite site to go on, to get the latest updated news is www.myfoxboston.com. Right when you go on that site you have immediate access to any and all local, national and international news, traffic, business,

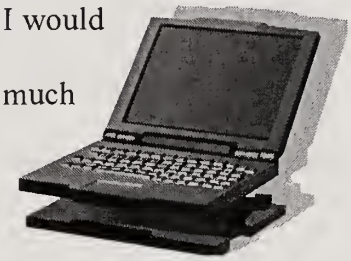
entertainment, sports and weather reports for both that day and from past days. So I am always on the Internet either checking the local news or the weather.

Fourth, the Internet is one of the most convenient ways to do all of your shopping. All department stores have their own website that you can go on and purchase items from and have it delivered right to your home, all without leaving your home. It can't get any more comfortable and convenient than that. There are also websites that sell items and you can purchase them through the site. The best time to do all of your shopping online is during the holidays. It's nice to get out during the holidays and see the crowd and decorations, but the shopping can be a bad experience, at least for me it is. I am not one that likes to wait in line for a long period of time to purchase my items. So I just sit at my home and go on the Internet and do my shopping. Another good thing about shopping online is that you can shop any time of the day when it's convenient for you, and you do not have to worry about the store closing.

As everything else that is good in life, the Internet does have its downsides. When going online you have to be sure that your personal information is not shared or that your computer does not get hacked in any way. I try to avoid it by just going on secure websites and websites that I have experienced in the past. One time I took the chance and tried to apply for a payday loan. As soon as I entered my information it linked me to another site. The next thing I knew I had a debit out of my account that I did not authorize, and it had nothing to do with the loan I was applying for. I first called the third party that was withdrawing the money out of my account. I asked them what the money was being withdrawn for, and how did this all come about? I got nowhere so I called my bank. Once I called the bank and explained my situation, they knew what I was talking about; I guess I was not the only one that had happened to. They reversed the withdrawal and had me close and open a new account. Another negative aspect of

the Internet is if you're purchasing anything online, you have to be sure that you are purchasing through a secure website. If you buy any items or services through the Internet and the site is not secured, you take a chance of your bank or credit card information landing in someone else's hands. One other downside I think the Internet has is that it is so easy to lose track of time when you are on it. It is so easy to access just about anything that you just want to keep clicking and reading, and the next thing you know so much time has gone by. There are some downsides to the Internet. You just have to be careful when you access it.

In conclusion, the Internet has become a very important form of media for many reasons. It is a quick and easy way to get information of any sort. A lot of people go on the Internet through their cell phones, which is my main source for access. Just imagine if for some reason the Internet goes away and we no longer have access to it. I know that I would be lost and so would many other people. Not only would so much information not be on hand with just a click away, one would have to go out of their way to get info, such as having to go to the bank's branch to do any banking needs instead of going on their website, or even having to take time to go to a library to do some research, instead of just googling information through the Internet. The Internet works wonders for me, when it comes to keeping in contact with friends and loved ones, billing and banking needs, accessing the local news and weather, and doing all of my shopping needs all with a click.



Jesse Conley

Basic Writing

Opinion Essay

Spring 2011

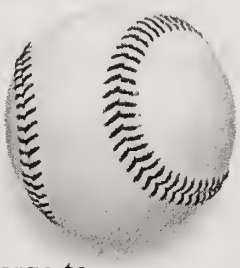
Why the Red Sox Will Win

The Boston Red Sox have begun their much anticipated 2011 campaign with a bust so far, going winless in all their games to start the season. This is a club that has made many upgrades during the offseason to a team that was already very good last year, and has had many fans, analysts, and baseball people around the country, including myself, picking them to win the World Series. The baseball season is a long and tedious one, consisting of 162 regular season games, and the law of averages clearly states that this team cannot and will not lose all of them. Currently, the Red Sox have lost all 7 games they have played, and it is my humble opinion that this trend will not continue and by the end of the season they will have won the 90 games necessary to make the playoffs.

I am part of a very large community consisting of millions of people. This community isn't what you would call normal, not like any school, neighborhood or church community that fits conventional standards. I am part of what some would call an insane community of fans who live and die with the results of the Boston Red Sox. I have been part of Red Sox Nation since I was a little boy and was turned on to the team by my grandfather, who himself was a former ballplayer. My interest in the team was then fostered by my grandmother, who took me to my first games at Fenway Park in 1986. Since then my love affair with the Red Sox has gone through many peaks and valleys with precipitous lows, losing the 1986 World Series, and also tremendous highs, winning two World Series in 2004 and 2007.

This year has started looking as though it will be a heart breaker, but I believe otherwise, and here is why.

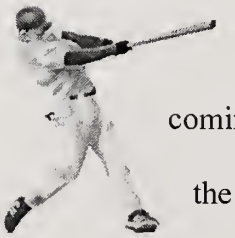
The first reason that I believe the Red Sox will make the playoffs is that their pitching staff has a proven history of being amazing and at times completely unhittable. The staff is made up of five starting pitchers: Josh Beckett, John Lackey, Jon Lester, Clay Buckholz, and Daisuke Matsuzaka. These are five proven commodities, who have been some of the most durable pitchers in baseball throughout their careers, and they have shown they can throw many innings and go deep into ballgames. Pitching is your best defense, and defense is what wins you ball games. If your opponent cannot hit the ball then they have no chance of scoring runs and there are three pitchers on the team who have continuously been among the league leaders in strike outs. As of yet, these pitchers haven't shown their true selves; they have allowed numerous hits, have not been striking people out, and have allowed too many homeruns. This has led to deficits that are too large to overcome.



The second reason the Red Sox will make the playoffs this year, even though they are playing so poorly, is that all of their games so far have been on the road. It is extremely hard to play in a hostile environment where the other team's fans want nothing more than to see you lose, especially a team as hyped as Boston is. The players have to endure cat calls, cursing, and just plain nastiness and negativity coming from these fans. On the flip side of this, when you are at home you have the complete and utter support of your fans. No matter how poorly you have been playing, the jeers turned to cheers can lift your spirits and allow you to play more loosely and confidently. There is also something to be said for home cooking; these are professionals, but also human beings like you or I, and the grind of being away from home too long can get to

anyone. Also at home they have their beloved stadium, Fenway Park, which is a hitter's paradise. Most of the hitters on this team are comfortable there knowing the surroundings and seeing the close fence in left field, which they aim at in each at-bat.

The final reason the Red Sox will not continue to lose ball games is that our lineup of batters is one of the best assembled in all of baseball. Besides the main stays on this team, such as Kevin Youkilis, Dustin Pedroia, and David Ortiz, this offseason we have added two of the more feared hitters in all of baseball, with Adrian Gonzales and Carl Crawford coming to our team. All five of these players have been consistent MVP candidates over the last few years, and two of these players have actually won this prestigious award. All five of the batters can also get so hot with the bat they will blister the best offerings of even the finest hurlers this league has to offer. As of yet, these hitters have looked meek and pathetic compared to the abilities we know they possess. Strikeouts on these hitters have been many and the hits have been few, but this trend will not continue.



There are some reasons for concern here and the fact the Red Sox have lost every game to date only brings these concerns into focus more. What if this team is getting old and the best years of some of these players are behind them? Age is something that you cannot control and with age comes slower bats making it harder to catch up to the pitcher's blazing fastball. With age comes more frequent and also more serious injuries that take longer to recover from, and if you're hurt there is no way to help your team win games. With age, the pitcher who used to go nine innings and throw lasers for strikes now tires more quickly and throws junk that looks the size of a juicy grapefruit coming at a batter.

As you see, the talent of this ball club is unparalleled in all of baseball. The beginning of the season has been difficult, and not at all what I, as a diehard fan and part of a great nation of

fans, would have expected. The pitching and hitting have been atrocious, but can only get better due to the quality of these athletes. Maybe the pressures that we have placed on them have been a little overwhelming and hard to deal with, or maybe they just need to get home and see their families, and have a hot home cooked meal to ease their troubles. No matter what the issue, everything is going wrong at the moment and this cannot and will not continue. The Boston Red Sox will win games and will make the playoffs, I guarantee it.

Feyza Kanberk

Basic Writing

Opinion Essay

May 5, 2011

Do Well; Do Not Smell

I have been working at a big company for almost four years. I am always proud of how big and how organized my company is. The name on the gate of the company I work for is United Parcel Services, "The Biggest Company in The World." This is true because over four hundred thousand people work for this company. I am one of the employees. In my location, there are three shifts with over 350 employees working each shift. I work the day shift, and there are many different types of people working at this place. If you are working at this busy place, you can sometimes become irritated because of some of the people who work with you. Some have personal hygiene problems that they are unaware of but affect people working near them. The purpose of good personal hygiene is to help avoid illness and improve appearance. However, hygiene also plays an important role in social acceptance and personal status. Bad breath or body odors, including too much cologne, are considered undesirable and can give a bad impression to coworkers and managers. In my opinion, some of my coworkers need to have better personal hygiene.

First, personal hygiene is an important part of our health. I think that personal hygiene includes cleaning, grooming and caring for our bodies. In my company, each person has different standards and ideas about personal hygiene. I believe that those differences vary among individuals depending on factors such as a personal preference, background, lifestyle, and culture. Workers should periodically wash their hands during the day. Sometimes I see that some

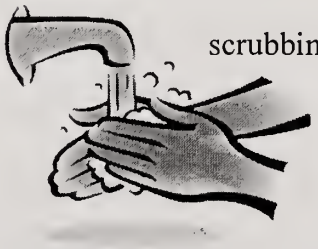
of my coworkers' hands are very dirty and unkempt. I never want to take something from them because their hands are so dirty. Our job requires us to handle hundreds of packages in a day. It can easily make our hands dirty. I also use a computer for my job and touch the keyboard hundreds of times during the day. For this reason, I wash my hands often during work. So, in my opinion everyone who works at my company should do the same thing. We're all responsible for maintaining our good health. Furthermore, whether people know it or not, personal hygiene can affect my health at work. Some people do not block their sneeze or cough, and spread their germs to me and my coworkers. They can have a cold or allergies and spread their mucus in the work place. Also, people do not always wash their hands after using the toilet. They touch a piece of equipment and those coworkers spread bacteria at work. Negative effects of poor hygiene in the work environment are people becoming sick, missing work, and reducing productivity.

Moreover, employees should have a fragrant body odor, but not too much either. I worked alongside an employee for one day who had poor personal hygiene, stinking, smelling clothes and bad breath. His personal hygiene was a terrible experience for me. He also smelled of coffee and cigarettes. I don't smoke, and this situation disturbed me because if you don't smoke the smell of smoke can bother you easily. It grossed me out to see the lack of personal hygiene and made me feel very vulnerable. So, I had to suffer in this uncomfortable situation all day long. There is nothing worse in the social area or at work than smelling bad breath, body odor, and seeing an unkempt appearance. If you have to work near an employee with strong breath, it can make you ill. There was an old woman who was working at another department. I was hearing unpleasant things from some people about her. Other employees had talked behind her back in the women's restroom and made fun of her

because she always smelled like curry, garlic, and other pungent spices. I was heartbroken for her. She is a very nice person, but people avoided her because of her body odor. It affects the way she feels about work. She thinks people don't like her. It is not true because they just don't like her body odor. I can understand that some medical issues can cause body odors. However, you can find some solution for this.

Finally, some people do not care about their appearance at work. I think that it's important to take care of yourself and to take some satisfaction in your appearance. You should always look good at work. All your clothes, hair, and nails must be clean. The people who work with you evaluate you on how you dress, how your hair looks, and how you smell. It is also important for your employer to present a neat appearance. Hygiene plays an important role in social acceptance and can improve a person's reputation at work. We're always judged first on our appearance which includes proper clean attire, clean combed hair, clean nails and clean shoes. If you dress and act properly at work, you have a better chance at being promoted. Personally, I always try to be clean and good looking while at work.

There are some simple solutions that make us more hygienic; good washing and scrubbing with water and soap helps to remove germs and chemicals. If my coworkers pay attention to their personal hygiene, they can prevent the spread of germs and diseases, and avoid skin allergies and skin conditions. My coworkers should wash their hands before, during, and after their work and before they take breaks to eat, drink or smoke. Showering or face washing after work is also a good idea. I always wash my face and hands before leaving my work. I also carry a hand sanitizer in my purse all the time. One should bathe every day before work, or every night before going to bed. Bathing will also help cleanse your body of odors. Wear deodorant or



antiperspirant daily if you tend to sweat. Avoid wearing too much perfume or cologne. You may think you smell nice, but your fragrance may irritate the allergies of people working near you. The other solution is to have a meeting about hygiene with all employees regularly. We already have meetings every week about safety. It would be useful if the supervisor hosted hygiene seminars like safety, and they gave all of us information about what we should do for personal hygiene. The company should be posting a personal hygiene message in the bathroom over the sink. They can also post some information with pictures on specific points, "Bad and Good Hygiene." They can give all of us an employee handbook with pictures showing what is acceptable and not acceptable at work. I believe that if we pay attention to personal hygiene in the workplace, we can reduce the spread of germs and disease and make a pleasant work environment.

In conclusion, our personal hygiene in the workplace is just as important as personal hygiene at home because it can directly affect workers' health and safety. At the same time, personal hygiene and hand protection can help keep workers productive on the job, and it will have a positive effect on our social life. People have a responsibility not only for themselves but for the coworkers and their workplace. If everyone cooperates in a joint effort to become people with good hygiene, my company will be a great workplace for me. Our slogan is, "What Can Brown do for You?" for all customers, and now we can change it to, "What Can Brown do for Us?"

Brenda Wood

Basic Writing

Opinion Essay

November 18, 2010

Zero Tolerance

They tell children there is zero tolerance for bullying now, yet they give them no education about it. Forever, kids have been teased, picked on, and put down, but in today's society with all the technology it is a growing problem which needs to be addressed. They have had many stories in the news of kids taking their own lives due to bullying, and a lot of it has to do with the Internet, or even cell phones. It is very sad to see. In the future I would like to see things change. Bullying can be humiliating, can affect school work and willingness to go to school, and affect someone for the rest of their life. In my opinion there should be more of a pro-active stance against bullying.

First, bullying can be a very humiliating experience, and it can make someone lose all of his self confidence. I have seen kids being bullied in school and how they walk around with their head down, afraid. In high school there was a girl who was overweight and I saw her being tormented by other classmates. She would walk around so timid, and looking down all the time. My heart went out to her, and that was probably the first time I noticed how bad bullying can hurt. It is very sad to see a child sad and hurt because of someone else, who probably doesn't even really know them, putting them down. I tell my children to stand up for themselves if anyone tries to bully them, but the most important thing I taught them was never to bully anyone. Unfortunately, not every parent teaches their kids the effects of bullying. Bullying is not only

physical, but also verbal. I think verbal bullying is what hurts the most. Remember the old saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." That is a good saying to live by, but in reality words can scar someone for life.

Also, I would like bullying to be addressed more because of the affect it can have on someone's school work, and their willingness to even go to school. I have heard many cases of kids being bullied so relentlessly they decide to do home schooling. I was watching "The Today Show" a couple of weeks ago and they had a young girl who left public school to be home schooled because of how severely she was being bullied by her peers. Children need to feel they are safe at school, and that is the responsibility of the teachers and parents. It is so unfair for a child to have to leave a school because of someone else's behavior or to have their work suffer. When you are a child you have so much to learn; it is life altering when you don't live up to your potential because of the actions of someone else.

Furthermore, bullying can affect someone for the rest of their life. Bullying can make someone go from a happy person to being depressed. It could change their whole outlook on life. They may not go on to college because the experiences they had were so devastating. That would certainly affect the job and life they could have had. Just to lose your self confidence changes your life. When I was a child, kids made fun of my ears. They called me Mickey Mouse and Dumbo, so now as an adult I am very self conscious of my ears. I hardly ever wear my hair up because of what they called me as a child. You would hope that a bully would grow up and have remorse for the people they picked on, but that's not always the case.

In conclusion, it is a very sad thing to see an innocent child being bullied. I would like to see the schools have more of a pro-active approach to this epidemic. They should start educating kids from the time they enter the school system up through high school. Also, parents need to

take more of a lead role in teaching their children about bullying. Teaching kids to have empathy for others is important from a young age. We should work together to help this problem. I believe schools should have guest speakers who have first hand experience with bullying. They could also have classes to educate kids on the effects of bullying, and support groups for kids in need. My daughter went to her teacher with a letter explaining how she would like to start something in her school that addresses bullying. She also wants to stand in front of her school with signs saying different things like "bullying hurts," or take a stance against bullying. I am so proud of her for taking a stand, and trying to improve our community. The need to stop this growing tragedy is urgent. Too many kids are taking their own lives because of the cruelty of others.

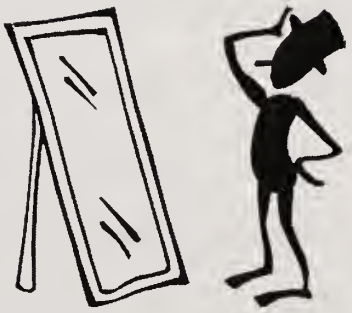
Daisy Ayala

Basic Writing

Reflection Essay

December 17, 2010

Reflections of Me



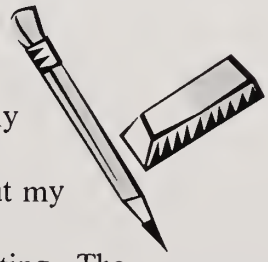
I was initially taken by surprise when I was told I had to take a writing class. It has been over twenty years since I graduated high school. I knew I was a bit "rusty" on my writing skills. I was afraid of what the turnout would be. Finally, I told myself it could not possibly be that bad. Little did I know that in order to write a good essay the process itself would be more complicated. I have learned that an essay needs to be structured, have lots of good prewriting and, most of all, lots of editing.

First, I learned that writing is more than thoughts, it needs to be structured. A good essay requires a good introduction with a strong thesis statement. The thesis should include three supporting details. I learned once I had the strong thesis statement, the body of the essay would fall into place. The three strong details would be my three body paragraphs and at the end of the essay I would write a good conclusion that refers back to my thesis statement. At the end of this process, I would have my completed essay.

Secondly, lots of prewriting makes the process of writing an essay much easier.

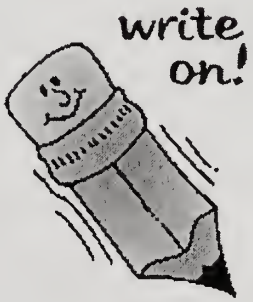
I never knew prior to taking this course how important prewriting really is. It makes the process of writing an essay much smoother. I learned to write all my thoughts pertaining to my subject on a piece of paper. The thoughts don't need to be in order, just in complete sentences. Those sentences then become your ideas to support the statements in the thesis. Wow! It made a big positive difference for me. Prior to taking the writing course I had lots of thoughts, but I didn't know how to put them together. Now, when I do my prewriting I put my thoughts on paper then just plug them into my paragraphs that pertain to my ideas. Prewriting is a great idea to help make the process of writing an essay much easier.

Thirdly, I learned in order to get a perfect end result you need lots of editing. Two of my biggest weaknesses in writing are my run-on sentences and punctuation. I believe I have learned a lot about how to handle these from this course. However, it is learning in process. Using spell check helps a lot. I learned from my teacher that reading my rough draft out loud to myself would help me find my grammar errors. "I do read it to myself," I thought. I learned that reading it to myself is not the same as reading it out loud. The first time I tried reading it out loud to myself, I found a lot of grammar errors. "Wow," I thought, "this really does work!" Now I use the process at work. I read all my emails and memos out loud before I send them. The editing process is the most important process for a perfect essay.



In the process of writing essays in class I had my easy essays, and I had my hard essays. My easiest and most favorite was the person essay. I wrote about my sister Banetza. The person essay was easy because it was more like personal writing. The hardest essay I had to write was the opinion essay. Although the opinion essay is about your personal opinion, it was hard for me to think about the topic I would write about. I knew I needed to find a topic that I could write a strong thesis about, with supporting ideas.

I have really enjoyed taking this writing course. It has given me more confidence in my writing skills. On the first day of class the teacher asked us to write how we feel about writing. My response to the question was, "writing to me is like a nightmare." That was my response because I had no organization for my thoughts. I didn't know what to write about or how to put the thoughts together. If I were asked that same question now I can honestly reply, "I can do this, bring it on."



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